



SONGWRITING WORKSHOPS FOR TEACHERS

TECHNIQUES FOR TEACHING
CONTEMPORARY SONGWRITING
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES BOOKLET

These resources were created
by Musical Futures Australia
and the Music Council of
Australia with support from
the Australian Government.



“ There’s an element to songwriting that I can’t explain, that comes from somewhere else. I can’t explain that dividing line between nothing and something that happens within a song, where you have absolutely nothing, and then suddenly you have something. It’s like the origin of the universe. ”

Nick Cave

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FOREWORD

Since the dawn of time, humans have developed ways to tell stories, inspired by our experiences and imaginations. One of the most significant and popular ways to tell stories is through song. Music Council of Australia's Songwriting Workshops for Teachers are designed to unlock the art and craft of songwriting so that teachers and students alike can build their skills and confidence.

WHY TEACH YOUR STUDENTS SONGWRITING?

- Students can direct the outcome of their music making and creatively apply their musical knowledge and skill;
- Students can express themselves, as well as work collaboratively with their peers to explore shared experiences and ideas;
- They develop the ability to critique and analyse their own work;
- Songwriting exposes them to a range of music technologies, as well legal issues around intellectual property rights, and an exploration of the value of ideas and creativity;
- Students can share their work through performance, recording and publishing of their song(s).

ABOUT THE MUSIC COUNCIL OF AUSTRALIA

The Music Council of Australia (MCA) brings together all sections of the music community in order to advance a diverse and vibrant musical life throughout Australia. MCA's activities span the music education, community music and music industry sectors to deliver campaigns and programs. Music: Count Us In, MCA's flagship program, is the largest school music education initiative in Australia. Building on its success, MCA is extending opportunities to senior primary and secondary teachers, to increase their confidence, resource toolkit and creativity when working with students.

ABOUT MUSICAL FUTURES AUSTRALIA

Musical Futures believe that music learning works best for young students when they are involved in making music, drawing out students' passion for music with an informal, collaborative classroom environment. The Musical Futures approach is revolutionising music education in schools across the world, including more than 300 Australian primary and secondary schools.

The program and resources are designed to meet the requirements of the Australian Curriculum: The Arts and take into account the content descriptors for music from 6.1.1 to 10.7.4

For more information, contact Music Council of Australia Program Director, Maeve Marsden: maeve@mca.org.au or 02 9519 9730



INTRODUCTION

Since the dawn of time, humans have developed ways to tell stories, inspired by our experiences and imaginations. One of the most significant and popular ways to tell stories is through song. Music Council of Australia's Songwriting Workshops for Teachers are designed to unlock the art and craft of songwriting so that teachers and students alike can build their skills and confidence.

This resource provides guidance on how you can support students with songwriting. Songwriting can be an excellent way of enabling students to express themselves about topics that are important to them, and in musical styles and genres with which they are familiar.

This guide suggests some processes, techniques and ideas for encouraging your students to write their own songs, without suggesting actual musical or lyrical content – this should come from the students themselves.

All songwriters, whether individuals or groups, write best in their own way, in the order which suits them and their songs, and very often dealing with more than one aspect of the writing at a time – for example, coming up with words and music together. Furthermore, they may well write different songs in different ways. So there is no one way to teach songwriting.

Consequently, there isn't one set way of using this guide. We have suggested a skeleton structure for how you might incorporate this guidance into a six-week project. However, this guide could also be used in a much less formal way, to support students working on composing/songwriting as part of any informal learning model.

This guide should be treated as a framework – student voice and creativity should form the content and determine the direction of all songwriting work.

Additional resources are referenced at each section. These articles and websites provide more detail and study material on the relevant topics.

PREPARATION

- Either ask students to bring songs to the lesson (for the comparison exercises) or have a number of popular songs of different structures/styles prepared that students can draw upon for discussion and inspiration
- Photocopy the student prompt sheets, if required

RESOURCES

- Practice spaces, one per small group
- Range of instruments – ideally a typical 'band' set up (drums, guitar, bass, keyboards, microphones), and/or acoustic instruments, classroom percussion
- Ideally, access to computers or iPads/tablets with music sequencing/sampling software or apps for students who want to compose electronically
- Flipchart paper and pens, and if possible audio recording equipment or iPads and apps, for students to record their ideas
- Copies of the student prompt sheets, if required

STUDENT SONGWRITING RESOURCES

The following student prompt sheets and work sheets are included in this set of resources. These worksheets will work best for secondary students, who are more likely to work independently. We encourage you to read through them as they will give you some tips or tricks for responding to student questions and adapting the exercises for different contexts.

- | | |
|--|---|
| • Prompt Sheet 1: Adding to our song | • Prompt Sheet 6: Creating and playing with others |
| • Prompt Sheet 2: Finishing your song | • Prompt Sheet 7: Forms that Fit. A snapshot of song forms |
| • Prompt Sheet 3: If you just can't get started | • Prompt Sheet 8: Clues from other songs |
| • Prompt Sheet 4: Using technology to get you going | • Prompt Sheet 9: Jottings ...so you don't forget. |
| • Prompt Sheet 5: Using a loop device to write a chorus | |

Your students may not need to use these prompt sheets and they should be offered as optional guides, rather than fixed instructions.

TECHNOLOGY TIPS

Throughout these resources and student materials you will see brief technology tips. They point to a range of technology tools and solutions to help you write your songs.



As listening can guide young songwriters through investigating how others have created great songs, enabling students to have in-school access to online music streaming sites such as Spotify, Last.fm, Deezer and We7 (current sites at time of going to press) can be beneficial.

TEACHING ADVICE

The following set of activities provides a step-by-step guide for how students might start, continue and finish a song. This is not a prescription of how students must write songs, but a series of suggestions and exercises for things they could do, especially if they get stuck.

It is important to stress to students that, when they express themselves in a song, no-one can say that something is right or wrong. However, it is beyond doubt that some songs are better than others and the care used when choosing notes, lyrics, chords etc., can make the difference between a satisfactory school exercise and a song which is really exceptional.

In this project, we use the word 'write' for making up or creating words and music. This does not necessarily imply writing on paper – and it refers both to the mental activity of creation and the recording of the song.

Though some students may prefer to write songs on their own, the material here is written for groups of students writing collaboratively.

LISTENING TO OTHER SONGS

We make specific suggestions for linking listening with songwriting throughout this guide, in order to encourage students to listen to as many songs as possible.

Students are likely to prefer writing the sorts of songs they enjoy listening to, but encourage them to challenge themselves and write other types of songs as well. Not only will this expand the range of possibilities, but it should improve their overall songwriting style. It also could lead them to discover some new music genres and styles.

RECORDING AND REVIEWING

Recording and reviewing work is a critical part of the creative process. It can be particularly frustrating for students if they forget an idea developed in a previous lesson. Flipchart pads and pens, as well as audio recording devices should be made available for jotting down and/or recording ideas and lyrics in progress in whatever way the students choose.

These ongoing notes/recordings should be available every lesson.

Recording (either audio or video) is also a crucial way of tracking student progress, both for the teacher and students. It can be very beneficial for each group of students to have a means of jotting down ideas aurally. This could be on their mobile phones (depending on school policy), or other available recording equipment.

See Prompt Sheet 7: Using a loop device to write a chorus

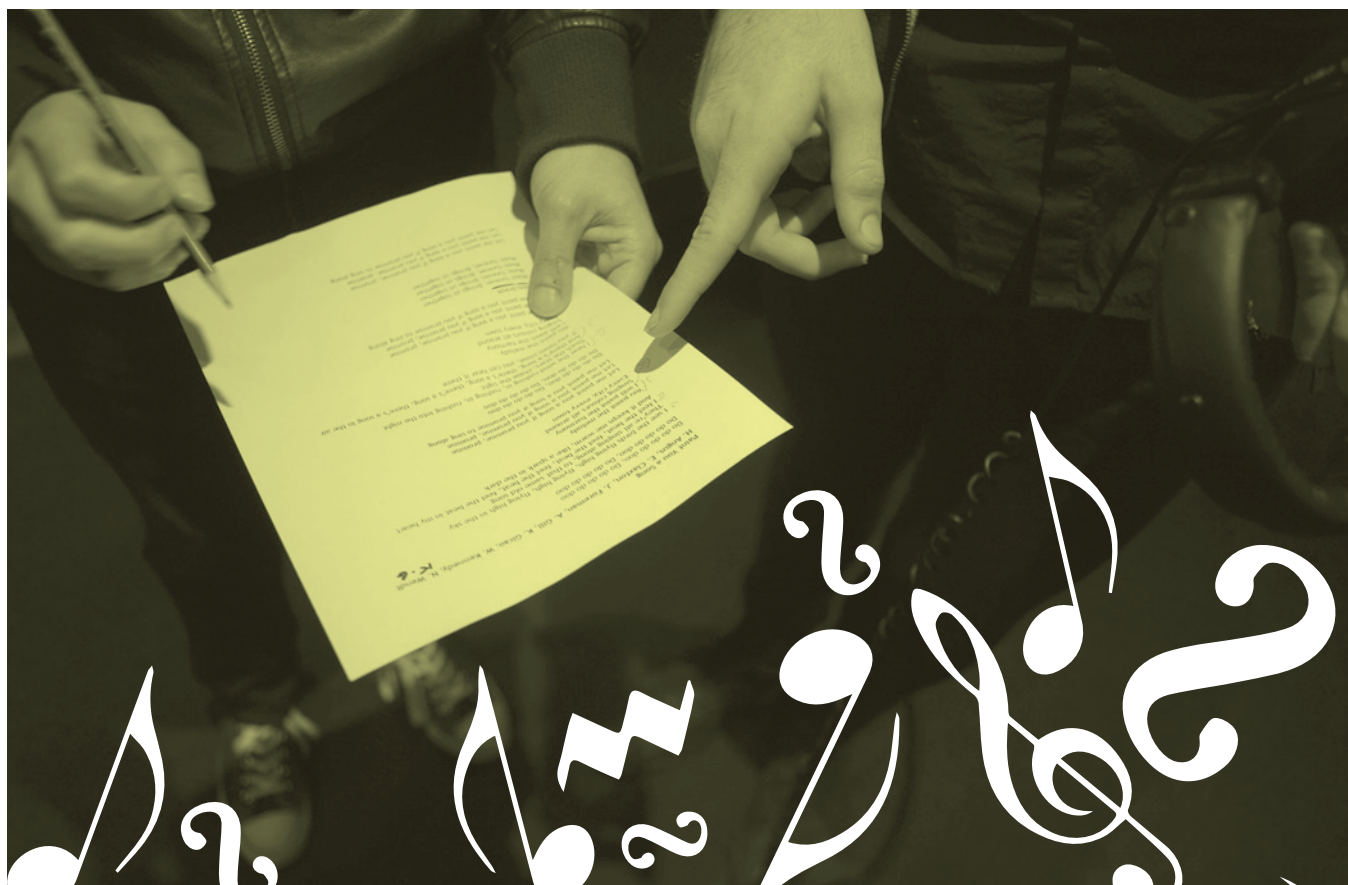


COPYRIGHT

It is useful to remind students that, if they are using other artists' words, music or recordings in their songs, they may not be able to play their songs in public or record them for distribution because the material will be protected by copyright. The rights of songwriters in Australia are managed by The Australasian Performing Rights Association (APRA), who amongst other things collect and distribute the artist/compose royalties.

Student songwriters should know about copyright. They are, after all, creating their own intellectual property and they should know how their ideas can be both protected and shared. Students can find out more from APRA but here are the copyright basics:

- Copyright protects the ideas of the creator;
- Copyright covers literary, dramatic, musical and artistic works. It also protects sound recordings, films, published editions, performances and broadcasts;
- A song may have more than one copyright. The lyrics will be protected as a literary work and the music as a musical work. The recording of the song will also be separately protected as a sound recording;
- Copyright protection is automatic, both in Australia and overseas. As soon as you write down your lyrics or music, or record it onto any medium, such as an MP3, CD or tape, it will be protected by copyright. So anything you write or create is copyrighted just by the act of creating it in the first place;
- You do not need a copyright notice on your work for it to be protected however it is advisable to warn people that you own the rights in the work. The notice is the copyright symbol ©, your name (and the names of other co-creators), and the year in which the work was created or published;
- Generally copyright in music and lyrics lasts for the life of the author or creator, plus 70 years after the end of the calendar year in which the author dies. If the work was not published, broadcast, performed or records of the work had not been offered or exposed for sale to the public until after the creator's death, copyright will last for 70 years from the end of the calendar year of first publication, broadcast, performance or when records of the work were offered or exposed for sale to the public;
- Australian copyright works are protected in about 133 countries, including Canada, China, France, Germany, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, New Zealand, Singapore, the United Kingdom and the United States. Similarly, works from these and other territories will be protected in Australia.
- You can find out more on the APRA website www.apra-amcos.com.au



AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM: THE ARTS

This program is designed to meet the progression points and standards required by the AusVELS arts curriculum.

The program:

- Allows students to apply decision making skills to find the most effective way to, design, create and make a popular song using a range of stimuli in support of the development of a personal style;
- Provides students with the opportunity to evaluate, reflect on, refine and critique their work and their aesthetic choices;
- Allows students to realise their ideas, represent their observations and communicate their interpretations by effectively combining and manipulating musical elements, principles and/or conventions to create a song;
- Provides students with the opportunity to work collaboratively, applying their knowledge and understanding to design, create and produce musical works that may be influenced by experiences, culture and skills of their collaborators;
- Allows the use of both traditional and contemporary media, materials, equipment and technologies in the creation, recording and performance of their music;
- Offers students the opportunity to record how their ideas developed in the creation and presentation of their song;
- Encourages students to analyse, interpret, compare and evaluate the stylistic, technical, expressive and aesthetic features of their music and of others;
- Develops students' use of musical terms and language.

The program can be adapted to meet the requirements of progress points 6-10.

The Arts curriculum is based around the notions of making and responding to the various art forms.

This program is designed to meet these objectives in the following ways.

Making

- Generating ideas for original music
- Experimentation with musical techniques appropriate to popular song
- Awareness of the structure of music
- Understanding the expressive qualities of music and how they can be applied
- Awareness of content and aesthetic qualities of music works
- Use of musical elements realise ideas
- Use of a variety of skills, techniques, processes and technologies appropriate creating and recording a popular song
- Applying aesthetic choices in the creating of a musical work

Responding

- Understanding the structural and expressive characteristics of their music making
- Identifying and using key structural musical features
- Understanding the effect of specific musical elements in creating music and song
- Reflection on different approaches to presenting a music to a variety of audiences
- Evaluation of audience feedback in response to the presentation of their music

PROJECT SNAPSHOT - 6 SEQUENTIAL LESSONS

The various activities included in these resources are divided into lessons below and separated out as individual exercises, but students should be reminded that, when they write a song of their own, they may want to deal with things in a completely different order.

This process could and should take place over as many weeks as students need; some exercises may each need two or three lessons. This is just a guide to illustrate one way of structuring a songwriting module in a six week period.

LESSON 1

- Introduction to songwriting project. (5 Mins)
 - Discussion of song topic ideas. (10 mins) Exercise A1
 - Students go into small groups and begin working on song topic and lyric ideas. (40 min) Exercise A3
-

LESSON 2

- Introduction and discussion of developing and reviewing lyrics. (10 min)
 - Students in small groups continue working on topics and lyrics. (40 mins)
 - Closing discussion, sharing some lyrics
-

LESSON 3

- Introduction and explanation of jamming on musical ideas and improvisation. (10 mins) Exercise A3, Student Prompt Sheet 6
 - Students in small groups begin creating material through jamming and improvising. (40 min) Exercise B1, Student Prompt Sheet 9
 - End discussion: problems faced and challenges, ways forward etc. (10 mins) Student Prompt Sheet 3
-

LESSON 4

- Introduction and discussion of writing a chorus. (10 mins) Exercise B2, Student Prompt Sheet 7
 - Students in small groups begin to write a chorus for their song. (40 mins) Exercise B2 and C3, Student Prompt Sheets 4 and 5
 - End discussion, some performances. (10 mins)
-

LESSON 5

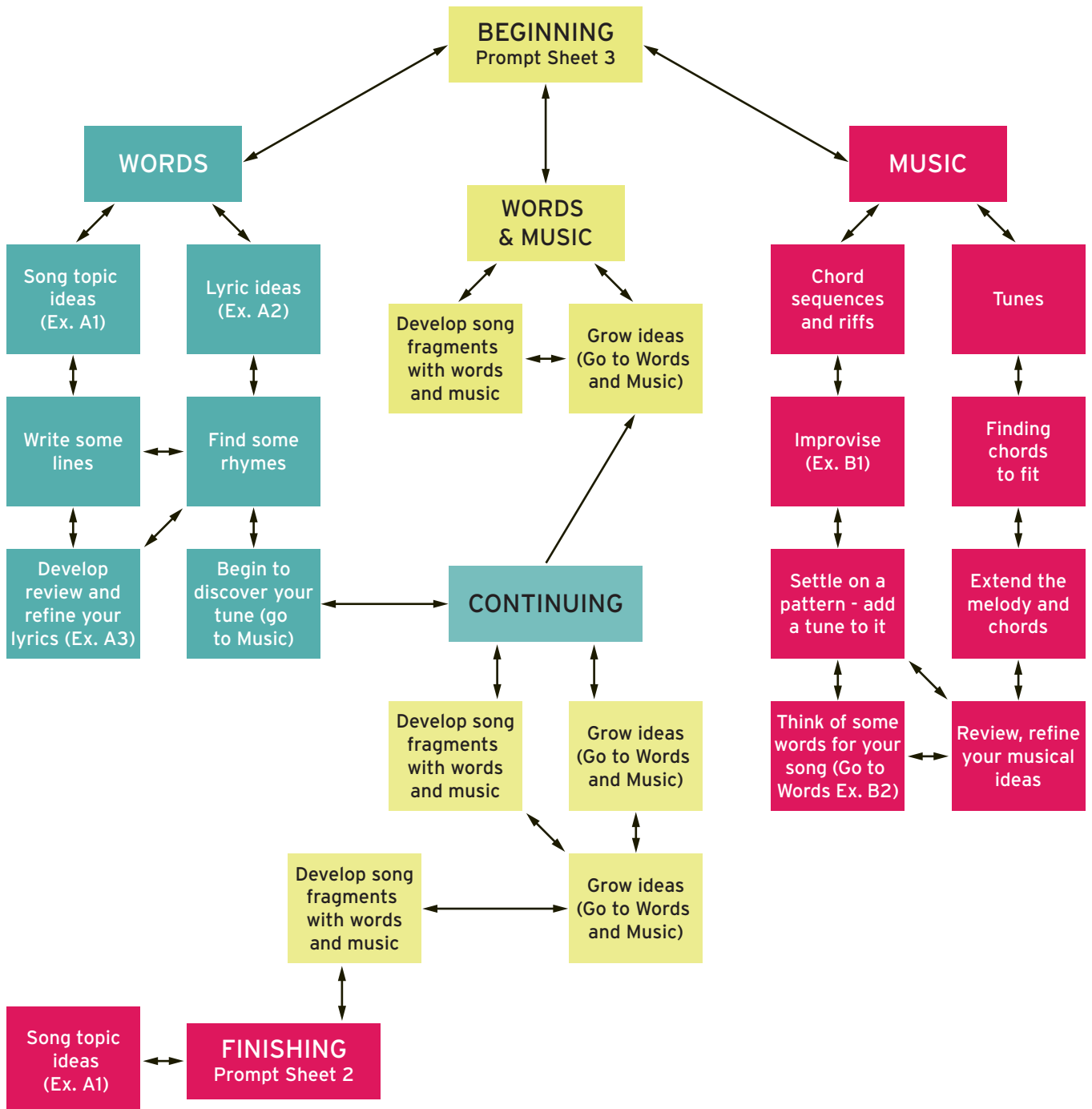
- Introduction and discussion of writing a verse. (10 mins)
 - Students in small groups begin to write a verse for their song. (40 mins) Exercise C4, Student Prompt Sheet 9
 - End discussion, some performances. (10 mins)
-

LESSON 6

- Discussion of putting verse and chorus together. (10 Mins) Student Prompt Sheets 2 and 7
- Students in small groups practice putting their verse and chorus together. (30 Mins)
- Final performances, recording session, evaluation. (30 mins)

WRITING A SONG

There isn't just 'one' way of writing a song, or even one 'best' way. The chart below should give you some ideas for how to get started – but you are completely free to go off in your own direction. You can always come back to these suggestions whenever you feel they might be helpful.



SONGWRITING AND TECHNOLOGY

Once upon a time the songwriter had just three tools: a pencil, paper and a musical instrument. Most of the world's best songs have been written just using basic tools alongside the creator's imagination, inspiration and patience. Today, there are lots of technology tools that can help songwriters create their songs.



Throughout these resources you will see this Technology Tips highlighted for student and teacher use.

Our technology tips include information on:

- Using a loop device to create your song or song accompaniment
- Multitrack recording
- Phone/tablet video
- Songwriting apps for phones or tablet devices that include rhyming dictionaries, chord suggesters, recording devices and more
- Using technology as your band
- Publishing and sharing your songs
- Playing your song online with others



If you have a smart phone or a tablet there are lots of apps that can help with your songwriting, many of which are free. They can't replace your ideas, inspiration or creativity but they can help resolve a difficult rhyme, suggest an alternate harmony or help you record your ideas. Here are a few suggestions:

- | | |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| • Simple Songwriter LE | • Sound Prism |
| • Roadwriter Lite | • Guitar chord Pro Songwriter |
| • Chord bank | • Chordbot |
| • Suggester-Chord Progressions | • Rhymenow |

“ I didn't have any agenda or plan when I started writing stuff... Often I don't know what the song means until it's finished. Sometimes months later. I don't think that's bad. It implies that I don't know what I'm doing but I think if you're able to follow your instincts, then that's knowing what you're doing... ”

David Byrne , Talking Heads

SONGWRITING ACTIVITIES - WHERE TO START

Students often ask whether the words or the music are written first in a song. It may be either, or both together. However, it can be useful to decide before starting what the song is going to be about, even though the basis of the idea may or may not be mentioned directly in the song.

Students using lyrics as a starting point should work through Exercises A1–A3, and students using music as a starting point should go straight to Exercises B1/B2. If students are beginning with fragments of words and music together (lines for a song) they may use aspects of both methods simultaneously.

Elements of songs (chorus, verse etc) don't need to be written in the final order in which they will be sung/performed when they are finished. In practice, songwriting usually happens as a non-linear process, therefore students should follow the exercises in the order most appropriate to them, and be able to revisit the exercises and refine their work as and when necessary.

“ Perspective is always important for songwriters, too. You have to have the perspective of who you are talking to and have a perspective of who is talking to you and you’ve got to stitch it together. ”

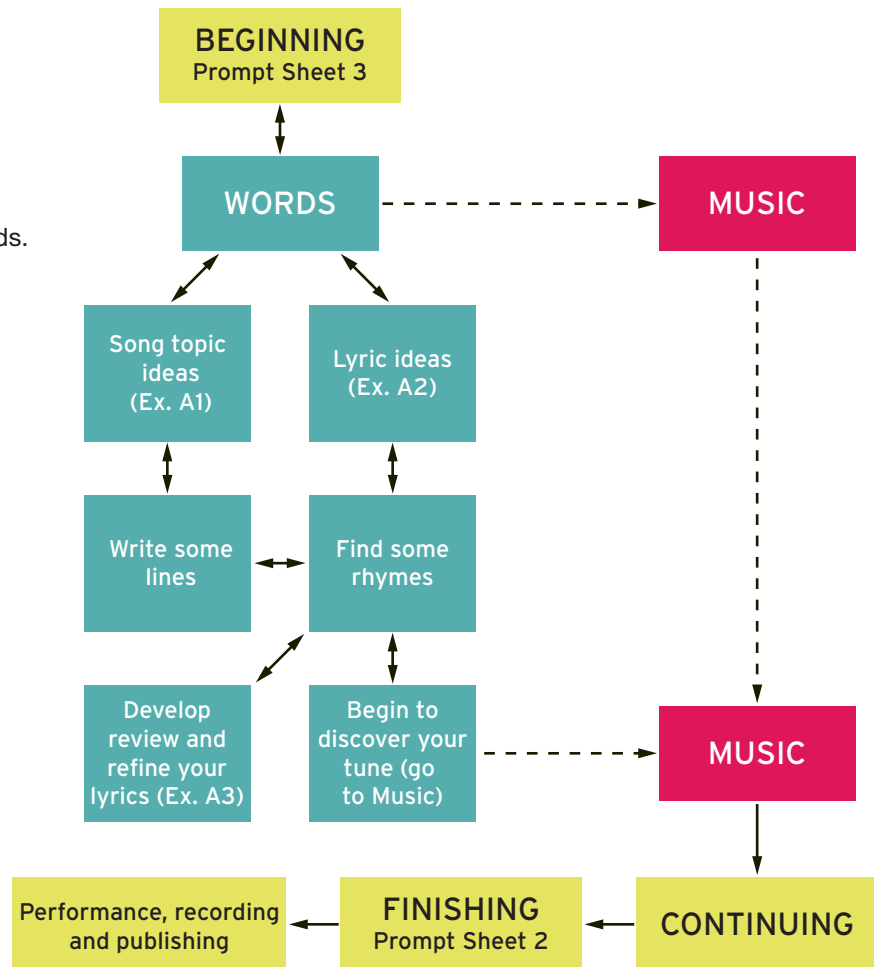
Chuck D, Public Enemy



STARTING POINT: WORDS

In this section we are going to focus on writing the words or lyrics for our song. We will look at

- Song topics
- Lyrical ideas
- Developing rhymes and rhyming
- Writing our first lines
- Looking at ideas for tunes
- Developing our music to fit our words.



Various books are available to help with songwriting ideas, including:

- *The Songwriter's Idea Book* by Sheila Davis
- *4,400 Song Ideas* by Rick Wicker
- *The Free Thinking Songwriter* by Karl Broadie



There are online tools that can be used to help lyric writing such as:

www.songwriting.net/blog/bid/56567/Songwriting-Tip-You-Can-Write-Better-Lyrics

Sometimes getting started can be the hardest part. An app like Songwriter Pad LE can sometimes help. Simply type in how you are feeling - happy, sad, angry, in love - and the Songwriter Pad LE can suggest some ideas to get you going.

There are also some online song writing tools such as LilacWriter (www.LilacWriter.com) website, where you can even find collaborators to work with.

EXERCISE A1: SONG TOPIC IDEAS

Students start by establishing the theme/topic that their song will be based on.

1. Ask students to divide into groups, or to work on their own.
2. Each group should choose a topic on which to write a song and discuss it, writing down or recording any interesting ideas that could be used to inspire their song and its lyrics. Some of the words and phrases chosen may later be used in the song, but, at this point, encourage students to concentrate on the topic and what arises from it, rather than thinking about the song.
3. Students should make a note of all of their ideas, and then go through them and decide which ones to use. It is possible that their ideas will be a mixture of words and music or even simply bits of tunes or chord progressions. If the ideas include music, see the B section of these resources.

Books to help with rhyming include:

- *The Complete Rhyming Dictionary* by Clement Wood
- *Merriam-Webster's Rhyming Dictionary* by Merriam-Webster
- *Hip Hop Rhyming Dictionary* by Gio Williams



Ask students to choose one of their favourite songs, listen to it and discuss what the song is about, for example:

- How many of the lyrics refer to the central theme/topic?
- Do they tell you everything at once or build up a story?
- Is anything else brought in from a different topic; if so, why?



Find some Rhymes

Sometimes finding the right rhyme is tricky. There are plenty of words for example that rhyme with love - "hand in a glove", "heaven above" are two examples but what happens if you need to rhyme with a word like film, orange, purple or month? These are tough words to rhyme but these tools might just be able to help.

Apps

Songwriter LE (free)
Rhyme Now
Rhymulator
Drhymes
Brhymes (Android)
RhymasaurusRex (Android)

Online

Rhymer.com
Rhymezone.com
Writeexpress.com
Rhymebrain.com

EXERCISE A2: LYRIC IDEAS

After establishing a topic for the song, students now begin writing their lyrics.

Ask students to review their bank of material for possible lyrics for their song. These needn't be the first lines in a song, although they could be.

- Where their selected material takes the form of verbal phrases, encourage students to find a good rhythmic way of expressing them.
- If there are some strong words or phrases, encourage students to search for more words about the topic which rhyme with them and make a list of useful rhyming words

Students should work on this until they have a few useful sentences and phrases



Ask students to choose one of their favourite songs and select examples of short phrases - words and music - where these two elements work particularly well together. Ask them to consider:

- Why are these so good? Are there any places where the words and music don't fit together well? Does this spoil the song?
- How are rhymes used - on any words, or on words important to the message? Do the rhymes fit with the rhythmic stresses in any way?
- Are the words easy to sing: which vowels work well on long notes; which consonants get lost when one word follows another?

Encourage students to make a phrase of their own modelled on one of these phrases, either by adding their own ideas to what the original song is about, or by choosing another topic for their phrase.

“ Sometimes when I write lyrics there are images in them, usually on a quite simplistic level, like colors. ”
Bjork

EXERCISE A3: DEVELOPING LYRICS AND BRINGING IN MUSIC

Students should now be in a position to develop their lyrics, using some of the material they have developed in Exercise A2.

1. Students should spend some time saying aloud, in rhythm, the words they have written. They should work on these, adding and taking away words, until they have two lines that work well together as lyrics for a song.
2. Next, using exactly the same rhyme scheme and rhythm, write another two lines.
3. If the meaning is not complete, students should continue the pattern (or choose another pattern) to grow the four lines into a longer section.
4. Students can start to think about how their lyrics might fit to music. If there is no music with the words yet, encourage them to say their phrases in different 'sing-song' ways, gradually singing lines to a new tune.
5. The second of the two-line groups will usually have new words, but could have the same music as the first two lines. However, students could change the music at the end to make a slightly different second half of the fourth line.



Ask students to choose one of their favourite songs, pick out some two-line phrases and consider:

- Is that structure then repeated immediately afterwards?
- If so, is it changed at all?
- Is it used again later in the song?
- How do other two-line phrases - different ones in the same song - relate to the one they chose?
- Why are ideas in music so often expressed in two-line phrases?
- Encourage students to create a verse or a chorus modelled on the best of these examples, either by adding their own ideas to what the original verse is about, or by choosing another topic.

Peer feedback: At this stage, it is particularly important to encourage peer feedback, because other points of view can open students up to writing a song which will be relevant to more listeners. It can also alert students to a repeated songwriting 'habit' that they may use without being aware of it, or warn them of other songs that they may have copied by mistake.

Remind students that the language of song lyrics is different from that of speech, stories, official forms, or even poems. This is because the sound of the words is as important to the message as the meaning and because the songwriter may want to imply more than is being said openly.

The music also contributes to the meaning – sometimes the music and the lyrics can give deliberately different messages. Students will need to consider what type of language (vocabulary and grammar) they will be using.

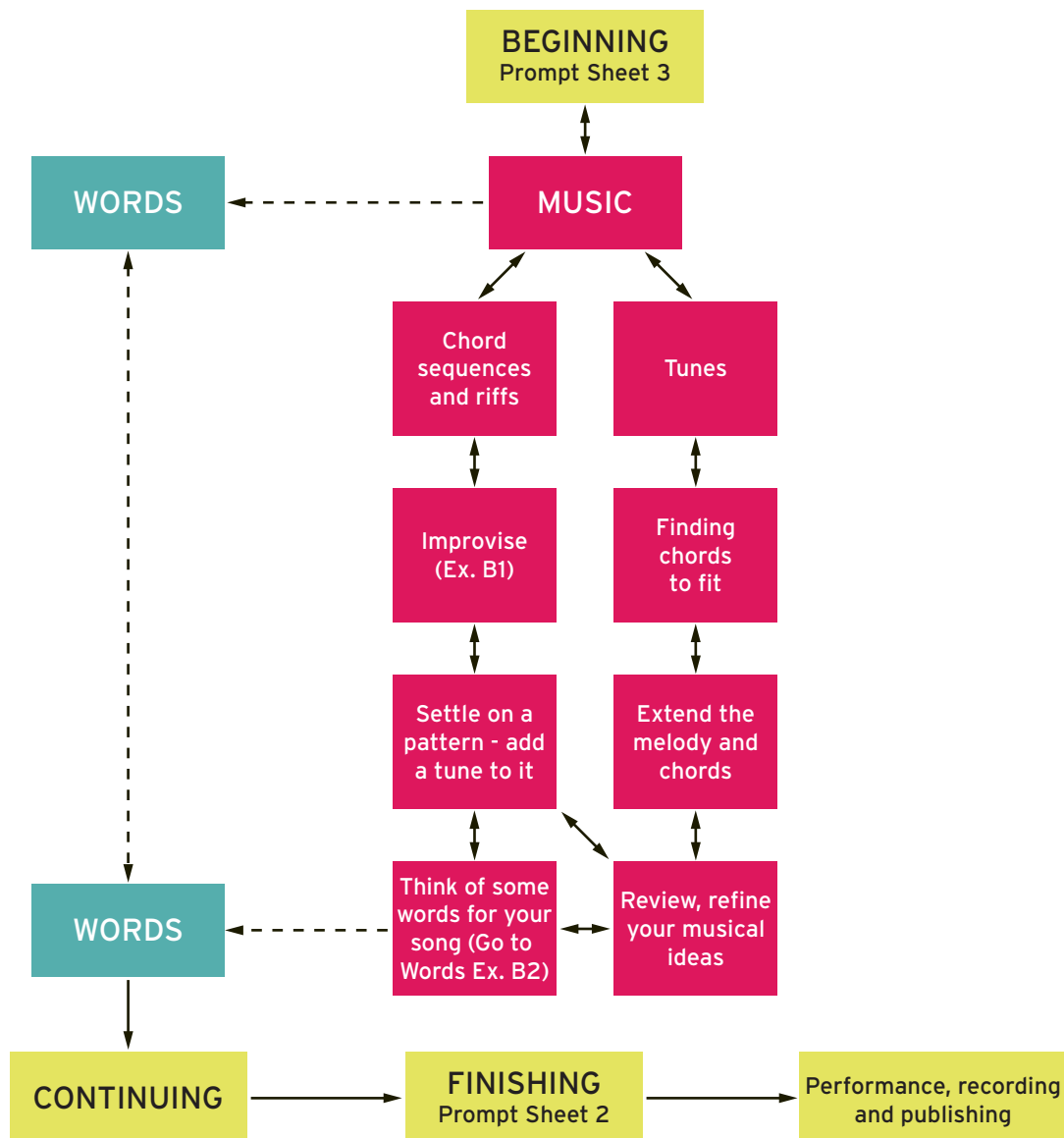
“ I've only written four songs in my whole life,
but I've written those four songs a million times. ”

Bob Dylan



If you thought there were lots of apps and other tools for writing song lyrics there are even more options to help with the music. The tools include apps for smart phones and tablets, online resources and hardware products, devices that can help you create your melodies, build an accompaniment and record and perform your songs.

STARTING POINT: MUSIC



Use the flow chart above to help with your process.

1. You might like to start with some chords.
 - Play 3 or 4 in any order and see how it sounds.
 - Change the order.
 - Play them for different lengths of time.
 - Does it sound like something that you would use as a chorus?
2. If someone has a melody in mind, can you find chords that fit? Change keys by singing the melody higher or lower to help find familiar or “right sounding” chords.

See Prompt Sheet 3 if you can’t get started.



A great way of developing your improvisation skills is to use a looper. A looper allows you to set up a backing and have it repeat over and over again. This way you can experiment and improvise new melodies over the backing until you work out the one you like best.

EXERCISE B1: IMPROVISING A BACKING

In this exercise, students use jamming and arranging to work up musical ideas for their songs.

1. Ask students to divide into groups, or to work on their own.
2. Using instruments and/or voices they should jam around a chord-sequence and rhythm with which they are familiar.
3. Encourage students to keep looping their musical ideas until they flow well.
4. If students already have an idea for a melody (with or without words), the chords of the backing should fit with it.



As a preparatory exercise, ask students to choose one of their favourite songs and do the following:

- Play along with the basic accompaniment a few times, and then play their version of the backing without the recording.
- Encourage students to try a few slight changes, for example the order of the chords, the bass line or the feel of the drum beat.
- Practise the new music and continue as above.



There are many websites where you can download samples, which may be bass sounds, drum sounds and loops, vocal samples and FX. Students can use these sites to keep their productions sounding fresh and current.

Web resources

www.soundonsound.com/sos/jan99/articles/20tips.458.htm

www.musicthinktank.com/blog/top-10-rules-for-better-songwriting.html

“ You learn by listening to tunes. And you try to understand them and take them apart and see what they’re made of, and wonder if you can make one, too. ”

Tom Waits

EXERCISE B2: ADDING A VOCAL AND BRINGING IN WORDS

If there is already an idea for a melody, it could be used as the basis for the next exercise. If not, students should improvise a melody (with or without words) over the backing developed in **Exercise B1**.

1. Encourage students to improvise lines of a tune, or to rap verbal phrases in a rhythm which fits their backing.
2. When students have part of a tune which fits the chord progression, they can try putting words or phrases to it.
3. Encourage them to go round this sequence, trying new ideas which work with the backing – they may be able to get more than a single line this way.
4. Once the improvisations bring up some useful lyric ideas consider referring to **Exercise A3**.

The style of an accompaniment can completely change what a song is saying. It can be a good exercise to try out different ways of playing a song to discover the different effects this can have.

“I’m sick to death of people saying we’ve made 11 albums that sound exactly the same. In fact, we’ve made 12 albums that sound exactly the same... Its just rock and roll. A lot of times we get criticized for it. A lot of music papers come out with: ‘When are they going to stop playing these three chords? To us, the simpler a song is, the better, ‘cause it’s more in line with what the person on the street is.”

Angus Young, ACDC



PUTTING IT TOGETHER

Students should now have some small sections of a song with words and music. At this stage, the sections may not fit together, but they should feel like part of the same song.

“ If I come up with rules or limitations it focuses me in a direction. And those rules can change if you realize it's a dumb idea. You start to mutate it to see what fits best. ”

Trent Reznor, Nine Inch Nails

EXERCISE C1: REVIEWING THE MATERIAL

Regularly reviewing and refining music and lyrics is an important and ongoing part of the songwriting process.

- If the ideas don't really fit together as part of the same song, students could consider which elements could be put aside or changed.
- As well as coming up with new lyrics ideas, students could try using different words and word orderings to improve the effect of the words that they already have written.
- As well as practising the music and improving the performance of it, students should be alerted to how small changes can have a powerful effect, and try out different chords and rhythms.



Ask students to choose one of their favourite songs:

- Explore how ideas are repeated, developed or replaced in the song.
- Consider whether any parts of the song don't fit well with the rest of it.
- Try to write some new words and music which develop these ideas.

EXERCISE C2: MOVING ON

Students will potentially have some song material by now, probably still in separate bits and pieces. Students can use any structure they like to put this together, but we suggest starting with the basic verse and chorus structure here:

Verse 1, Verse 2, Chorus, Verse 3, Chorus.

1. Students should listen to their work and decide whether each completed section or uncompleted idea would work better as part of a verse or part of a chorus.



Ask students to choose one of their favourite songs:

- Try splitting it up into different sections, identifying verse(s) and chorus(es)
- Listen to what is 'said' in each part of the song. Do the words in a verse have a different message from another verse, and from the chorus? Is the music different in the introduction?

2. Now students should try to shape their own material into verses and chorus.

See **Student Resource Prompt Sheet 7: Forms that Fit. A snapshot of song structures.**

EXERCISE C3: COMPLETING A CHORUS

Students now work to finish their choruses.

1. If students already have part of a chorus but don't know how to finish it, encourage them to analyse what they already have. Is there anything that still needs to be 'said' in their chorus? Does the music feel complete in itself or is there something missing? If there is still something missing in their chorus, try these suggestions:
 - Repeat one or two lines in the chorus, or repeat a line with a very slight change (perhaps in the harmony).
 - Include a line from the verse in the chorus.
 - Check that the students are sure that what they actually have is a chorus. Might it be a different section?



Ask students to choose one of their favourite songs and analyse the chorus by asking questions, such as:

- How long is it, related to the verses?
- Is it in the same key as the verses?
- Does it end with the home key or lead to that?
- Does the rhythmic feel change in it?
- Does it 'represent' the song?

2. Then encourage students to write their chorus on the same model.

“ No masterpiece ever came overnight. A person's masterpiece is something that you nurture along. ”

Brian Wilson, The Beach Boys

EXERCISE C4: COMPLETING VERSES

Students now work to complete their verses.

1. If students already have part of a verse, encourage them to try finishing it off as described in **Exercise A3**.
2. When students have finished one verse, they should write a second and perhaps third verse, using the same music and rhyme scheme as the first, but with new words. As far as possible, encourage them to keep the number of syllables in the lines the same, and to be careful where the stresses in the words and sentences fall.
3. Encourage students to try to move the 'story' of the song on and not simply say the same things again. Students might do this in various ways, for example by telling the next thing that has happened or that they want to happen, or by explaining the first verse further. If while working on Verse 2 they decide that they want to change the order of the lines or the verses around, that is fine; just because they wrote one verse first, it doesn't mean that it needs to be sung first.



Ask students to choose one of their favourite songs:

- Analyse the rhyme scheme in the verse, and the structure of the verse as couplets (two-line sections).
- Find out if any rhymes then come back later in the verse; if so, what effect does this have?
- Analyse what is taken forward by each new verse of the song. Is anything revealed that was hidden before?
- Encourage students to base their verses on the same model.

“ I don't write songs to please anybody. If they're not interesting to me, I don't write them. And then if I like them, I want to share them. That's all you can do. ”

Ray LaMontagne

FINISHING THE SONG

By now, students should have a song structured as below, though there may be more or fewer than two verses.

Verse 1, Chorus , Verse2

In a six-week project, students may only get as far as this, and it is a good achievement if they do. But if they have the opportunity, they could now extend and refine what they have already written to complete a full song, complete with repeat choruses and 2-3 verses.

The student prompt sheets are designed to provide some questions and ideas students might consider if they are unsure about how to finish their song.



There are lots of great ways to publish and share your music online. We suggest you begin with **NUMU** (www.numu.org.uk). NUMU has been specifically set up for student composers, songwriters and performers. Other options include:

- Soundcloud - this is used by amateur and professional musicians alike - www.soundcloud.com
- Whole World Band - here you can upload a video of your song and invite other musicians from around the world to collaborate with you on your song - www.wholeworldband.com
- If you think you have written a hit song then you can look at uploading your songs to sites like tunecorp.com or online publishing sites, including iTunes. But before you do that we suggest you research the issue of copyright and royalties at - www.apra-amcos.com.au

PERFORMING AND RECORDING THE SONG

Performance opportunities can provide motivation for students to finish their songs, as well as a sense of achievement when performing music of their own creation to others. We would strongly recommend building in some form of performance at the end of any songwriting project – either recording student work and uploading it to NUMU (www.numu.org.uk), students performing to their classmates, or performing in a school or local concert.



Recording - Songwriters are spoilt for choice when it comes to recording their songs. If you have access to a recording studio, that's great, but alternative include:

Apps: There are a large number of recording apps available from either the iTunes store or the Google Android app store. Popular ones include:

- Songwriter Pad Multitrack
- Jammit
- Multitrack DAW
- Four Track (Android)
- Roadwriter (Android)

Handheld recorders: These devices are small, simple to use and can be used anywhere so are just as convenient as the smart phone or tablet apps. They include inbuilt stereo mics that are great for capturing your initial ideas, rehearsals and performances. They connect to computers using USB. We like the current Roland R-05 and R-26 models but other products are available.

Computer based recording: There are many computer programs that can record multi-track recordings. From Garageband to Ableton, Protools, Logic and Acid they all do the same thing - record your music. They are sophisticated tools, though, so do require some practice to use.

TIPS AND TRICKS: ASSESSMENT, EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES AND MORE

Assessment and peer review

- Regular and frequent peer review of developing work is important as this helps students to see how others' work is developing.
- As an end assessment for the unit, give each student a sheet with basic levelling criteria and ask them to mark every group's songs. They should be asked to find positive things to say as well as questions they would like to ask the writers about anything they felt didn't work as well

Students with Special Education Needs

- Ensure that students with Special Educational Needs receive the right sort of support – either focused teacher support or older students working alongside as peer support.
- Stretch gifted and talented students by asking them to compose in a style which is unfamiliar to them, or setting a challenging topic for the song.

Cross-curricular links

Consider developing a cross-curricular project with the English department, with lyric-writing forming part of a creative writing course

Songwriting Competitions

Students may like to enter their completed songs into songwriting competitions. We recommend the following:

- Music: Count Us In – www.musiccountusin.org.au
- Australian Children's Music Foundation: acmf.com.au/songwriting-comp/national-songwriting-competition/

Songwriting Club

Consider establishing a songwriting club, ideally with a music technology link, for budding songwriters to continue with their work. The Writers Unblocked resource developed by the Leeds pathfinders, gives some ideas for developing songwriting as an extra-curricular activity.

Further resources are available here: www.musicalfuturesaustralia.org/resource-bank.html

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Should students use rhymes in their lyrics?

Rhymes play an important role in the effect of a song. Because people expect them, there is often a feeling of disappointment if they are not there. However this doesn't necessarily mean they have to be used. If students need a rhyme, but can't find one, they could try changing the order of words in the sentence to have a different one at the end (for example 'leave for the town right away' changed to 'leave right away for the town'). However, no rhyme at all is usually better than a sentence which doesn't sound right (for example 'right away, for the town you must leave').

A half-rhyme can sometimes be used. For example, 'town' and 'now':

'Really got to go,
Got to get to town,
There's no time to lose,
I must be there now'

However, if this gets taken too far it often doesn't work. This will depend on other things, such as how rhymes are used elsewhere in the song. Encourage students to try saying the phrase out loud and listen to it carefully. If they have to do this a few times before they are happy with it, it probably isn't good enough.

Rhymes need to be made by matching the strong syllables: 'singing' rhymes with 'ringing' and not with 'one thing'.

Another trick is to use the same word again, for example:

'There's no time to lose,
Got to get to town,
It's all far too late, and I
Have to be in town'

A rhyming dictionary can be a useful resource to have available for students to refer to, or they could write their own collection, based on the topic of the song.

Does it matter if it is difficult to sing the words?

This doesn't matter provided that somebody can sing the words. That said, students probably don't want their songs to be show-off pieces for clever singers, so encourage them to do all they can to make the words singable, either by changing the speed or rewriting the music.

Using one note per syllable can work well (unless students are looking for a specific effect). It is always effective to match strong beats, rhymes and words which are important to the message of the song.

Some words are more easily sung on high notes than others and some words are more easily sung in fast succession than others. Changing words can often help, for example 'get down quickly, please take care' is more difficult to sing quickly than 'come on down and take more care'. (Students could be asked to analyse why.)

If the words could easily be mistaken for others, this could either be a disaster or a triumph depending on what effect your students want. (Did he sing 'robber banned' or 'rubber band'?)

Does the rhythm come first from the words or the music?

It depends, and it could be either, but what is important is that the words and music fit well together rhythmically. When speaking the words, you would be unlikely to have long extended syllables in the way that you do when singing. From this point of view, the music is more important in giving the rhythm. But in all other respects it is the other way around; the song will work if the rhythm fits the words and it won't work if the rhythm doesn't fit the words.

What if a student is struggling with writing tunes to lyrics?

Encourage your students to repeat their lyrics in rhyme with the accompaniment, and gradually a simple tune should come. If it doesn't, they could try writing a simple chord sequence and choosing one or two of the notes of each chord in turn, singing the words on those notes until the chord changes. Then sing the next bit on notes from the next chord. Again, a tune is likely to emerge gradually. Another approach is to write the tune first and then add the lyrics. Often, during the course of working on a song, the tune will change as people keep singing it, and this can mean it gets better.

One of my students' songs sounds like somebody else's, but they don't want to make big changes.

Sometimes changing just one small part of a tune can make a lot of difference, especially if it is the first, last or highest note. Encourage your students to try to find another note which fits with the chord and carry on from there. Then, they may be happy to move a few more notes around.

Another method is to keep the notes the same but change the rhythm. For example, a tune that starts with four even notes will sound very different if you make the first note longer and the next three shorter. This may also mean changing the words.

Students may also consider changing the chords. This can have a surprisingly strong effect on how the tune sounds.

What if the verse and chorus sounds the same?

Suggest that your students try:

- Changing the harmonies within either the verse or the chorus.
- Changing the key within either the verse or the chorus.
- Putting the musical lines in a different order.
- Adding an extra line in the verse, possibly a repeat.
- Changing the texture or the basic beat (for example swing the chorus).

Alternatively, unless their song is of the kind where this doesn't matter (as in some kinds of Blues, for example) it might be worth writing a new tune for one of the sections.

Students are saying their song sounds boring

Is this because they keep repeating the same idea? Could they say the same thing in different ways?

Encourage them to try changing one or two words to see what happens. Or try changing where the main word (which relates to the topic of the song) is placed; at the very beginning or end of a line is often good.

Changing the order of the verses may help.

In a good song, there should be a balance between repeated elements and new things. This will depend partly on the style of the song. It is worth students analysing good songs to find the moment when something new is brought in.

Sometimes, words sound dull because they are not focused on one subject and wander between different ideas. Unless this is the whole point of the song, students could improve lyrics by making sure that they keep to the subject.

You could also encourage them to think of a new image to express their ideas (if something is boring, maybe it feels like having to 'live with your head full of porridge'; if someone is beautiful, maybe that person 'makes you feel like rain is made of fizzy blue water') or to come up with a surprising way of saying what you think, by exaggerating ('the lesson lasted a million years') or using unexpected words ('he plays football like a soapy superstar').

The effect of a song comes from all of its elements, so what may sound a dull lyric when spoken can be fantastic when sung. Other helpful changes may arise from considering the following:

- Does the music contain too many lines with the same tune following one another?
- Do the chords always come in the same order and end the same way?
- Does the bass line only ever play the main chord note on the first beat of the bar?
- Could the highest note in the tune get moved towards the end of the section?
- Could the rhythm in the accompaniment get adjusted slightly to change the feel?
- Is the tempo right?
- Is the texture always the same?

What if the group disagrees about something in the song?

This can be the result of having a few students with strong creative ideas in the same group. Encourage everyone to try out all of the ideas, ensuring everybody's suggestions get heard. They may then discover what works best, and choose from all the available material.

Encourage students to play different versions of the song to other people – students from other groups for example – whose opinions they trust, and ask for comments.

Sometimes, a compromise is possible (using different versions in different verses, for example). But ultimately students are going to have to go with one agreed song. If they are performing it themselves, encourage them to go for what they can perform best.

STUDENT SONGWRITING RESOURCES

The following optional Student Prompt Sheets provide further information for students writing their own songs in the classroom. They are designed to be used in conjunction with the Educational Resources, and for students to have access to them should they need them.

Students can use the suggestions provided in the **Student Prompt Sheets** and can use the **Workspaces** to capture and organise their ideas.

The following student prompt sheets and work sheets are included in the STUDENT WORKBOOK

- **Prompt Sheet 1:** Adding to our song
- **Prompt Sheet 2:** Finishing your song
- **Prompt Sheet 3:** If you just can't get started
- **Prompt Sheet 4:** Using technology to get you going
- **Prompt Sheet 5:** Using a loop device to write a chorus
- **Prompt Sheet 6:** Creating and playing with others
- **Prompt Sheet 7:** Forms that Fit. A snapshot of song forms
- **Prompt Sheet 8:** Clues from other songs
- **Prompt Sheet 9:** Jottings ...so you don't forget.

Your students may not need to use these prompt sheets and they should be offered as optional guides, rather than fixed instructions.



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Student Prompt Sheet 1: Adding to your song

If you have already written a chorus and verse (or verses) of your song, consider some of the following ways of adding to and improving the structure:

- An **introduction (intro)** comes at the beginning of a song. It may be in a different tempo from the main song (usually slower) and can be quite short. It is also often rhythmically freer in performance than the rest of the song. The intro opens up the song and prepares the listener for what the song is going to be about.
- The **coda** comes at the end of a song; it is sometimes called the **outro**. The coda can be the same as the intro, or the same music with new lyrics, or it could be something completely new. The coda finishes the song off and tidies up any loose ends. It can be helpful to have a coda if the main song doesn't sound complete. It is also possible for the coda to be repeated again and again and faded out. (You can do this with a chorus also, or even a verse, though that is less usual).
- If you want to add something new and another verse or chorus is not the answer, there are other sections that may be added to the basic structure. These new sections may be called **bridge**, **middle eight**, **link** or **coda**, and they may be placed anywhere helpful in a song.

Good places for new sections are between the third verse and the repeat of the chorus, to add a sense of anticipation before the chorus returns; or after the second chorus, where they can tell a different part of the story. In that case, the chorus is usually repeated for a third time to end the song.

- Another useful addition to a song – because it changes the focus and keeps the listeners interested – is to have one of the sections played as an **instrumental** rather than sung. The instrumental can be based on any section of the song, but it often works best as a verse because it is really another way of telling the same story. (Also, it is usually stronger when the chorus itself is always sung; that fixes it in the listener's mind). The instrumental is often called a **solo**, especially when it gives an instrumentalist a chance to show some clever improvising or playing.



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Student Prompt Sheet 2: Finishing your song

These questions are designed to help you to finish your song and to check that you are completely happy with it. Ask your teacher or one of your friends if you need some help deciding the answers to the questions.

- Does your song build and get more interesting as it goes through?
- Could you add some riffs or other ideas which energise the song?
- A song can get your immediate attention by using a hook: a short phrase of music and words which sticks in your mind. Does your song have a 'hook'?
- Is there a phrase in your song – music or lyrics – which never sounds quite right? Or is there a rhyme which, however often you sing it, always sounds a bit off? Are you sure that nothing could be changed for the better?
- Many songs are spoilt by being over-written. Are there any words or phrases you can take out without losing something? Is every verse necessary?
- Is the tune too similar all the way through your song? Could you change one of the chords to give the harmony an unexpected lift?
- Could the accompaniment work better? Is the rhythm really tight?
- Does the overall texture of the song allow the main message to get through? Not all the different instrumental sounds need to be as loud as each other; is your backing well balanced? Is it the same all the way through? Do you ever have any glimpses of silence?
- How does your bass line work? Could you change some notes – without changing the chord progressions – to make it better?
- How about the drum pattern? What if you were to anticipate the off-beat slightly by playing it just before it is expected?
- Is there a need for some vocal harmonies? Just adding another voice singing the main tune every now and then can really lift a song
- Have you noted or recorded everything you need to remember the whole song? What if the group working on it changes? Would the ones remaining be able to take it forward without the ones who have left?
- Can you identify the things that your song needs to be better?



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Student Prompt Sheet 3: If you just can't get started

Lyrics

Here are some ideas to get you started:

- Discuss how you feel when you wake up on a Monday, a Friday and a Sunday. These could be the subjects for your three verses. For the chorus, discuss what is the same about the 'me' who goes through all these changes.
- Try and remember the last time you were really happy. Describe where you were and why you were happy (Verse 1). Describe what you were doing and what you were thinking (Verse 2). Describe exactly how you were feeling (Verse 3). For the Chorus, say how you are feeling now.
- Think about the street/area where you live. In the first verse, think about the look of the street, the houses, shops etc. In the second verse, write about the people on the street, who they are, what they are thinking. In the chorus describe how you feel about your street/area. Then, write a third verse about what you would like to change about your street/area.

Music

Here are some ideas to get you started:

- With a steady rock rhythm, a good heavy first beat and a strong offbeat, 1 – 2 – 3 – 4, 1 – 2 – 3 – 4, at a medium speed, try playing the following chord progression (one bar each chord):
A major, D minor, A major, E major
G major, E major, G major, E major
- Clap a football chant rhythm and make an instrumental version of it with the drums. Split it into four equal bars or double bars (repeating if necessary). Add a bass note of E to the first bar, G to the second, A to the third, B to the fourth. Go round and round this, trying different chords on top. As an alternative, try C instead of A (third bar).

Riffs

Make a song based on the following riff:

Gotta go
Now, gotta
Go now
Gotta go
Now

Here are some lines you may wish to use:

Time is running out and so am I
No time to stop, No time to stay
Here is where I mustn't be



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Student Prompt Sheet 4: Using technology to get you going

Sometimes it helps to record your progress as you go. This is particularly the case if you or someone in your group is playing or singing to get ideas. You might record each phrase, riff or melody segment in order to remember it as you go. This allows you to play back the segments and compare them, and change the order or placement within the song.

The simplest way to do this is to use a phone or tablet to record. Doing this in video mode has some advantages as any instrumentation or chording may be captured at the same time. It will also give a clue as to when and where you recorded it and this can sometimes be helpful.

Multitrack Recording

It can be helpful to record a chorus or verse with multiple parts. You might start by recording the chords to a song section. This will allow you to try other instruments and riffs recorded on another track to see how they sound together. It is a particularly good way to find melodies that work as it allows you to sing over the top of the recorded tracks as many times as you require to find something that you like.

There are many, many products, software and applications that will allow you to do this on computers, tablets and phones. Some simple and popular ones include:

- Software-Garage band, Pro Tools, Cakewalk, Logic
- Apps – Songwriters Pad, Audio Star, Jammit, Techno Studio and many more
- Hardware- multi track recorders, loop devices (see Student Prompt Sheet 5)

Keep a record of your tracks and parts as you go using the log sheet on the following page.



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SONGWRITING RESOURCES

Song Title..... Writer(s)

TRACK	INSTRUMENT	SONG SECTION
1	(Guitar –Chords guide track)	Chorus
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		
7		
8		
9		
10		
11		
12		
13		
14		
15		
16		
17		
18		
19		
20		
21		
22		
23		



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Student Prompt Sheet 5: Using a loop station to write a chorus

Loop machines can be a very quick and spontaneous way to start and develop ideas.

Using the Boss RC-505 pictured below, we can create a 4 bar section that can serve to get your group well on the way to developing a song.



Image: sourced from Boss website: www.rolandconnect.com/product_2013-04.php?p=rc-505

Here is just one suggestion as to how you might go about it.

If you have a steady beat in mind for your song, you might get a beat going as a guide for your recording. Select a beat that feels right to you and set the tempo that you can work with for the recording. Next use a microphone or an instrument plugged into the Loop Station.

Track 1: Record the chords for 4 bars in a simple form, using keyboard, guitar or whatever you have. This can provide a very useful for you to try the lyrics, melody, harmonies or other instrument parts you have in mind for your song.

Press the button to put it into record mode, then play your instrument part into the looper, press the button to go into overdub mode. Press play again to play back the loop you have just recorded.

Track 2: Press play on track 1 and Record on Track 2. Record a bass line or other instrument line that might provide the “feel” you want for the song.

Track 3: Record a melody line.

Track 4: Record a different vocal line.

Track 5: Try adding some backing harmonies or percussion parts.

The thing about loopers is that you can overdub continuously or use each track to try different “takes” of your song part. You will soon create something you like.

When you do, SAVE it (press the WRITE button x 2). You now have a section of your song!



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Student Prompt Sheet 6: Creating and playing with others

Playing music with others is as much about teamwork as it is about the music you play.

Start simple

It is always easier to start with a very simple melody, chord progression, bass line, or drum pattern, and then add in more complexity and depth to it as the song progresses.

Most musicians, when jamming, spend the first part of the song “figuring it out” and then spend the later part of the song actually expressing themselves and creating their own variations. Until you get comfortable with a song’s basics, it won’t help playing complex solo lines or fills.

If you’re the “leader” or if you feel that your fellow songwriters are with you, you might be tempted to start out with more complexity. Avoid this, because it helps to get everyone understanding and playing the first verse or two with something really simple, and you can spend that time coming up with a really amazing part that you can play later on.

Listening

Pay attention to what others are saying and to the music that is being played around you. Add to it only when it is necessary. You should begin to hear the lines that you want to play before you play them.

Allowing space for others (don’t over play)

It is important for everyone to contribute. It doesn’t matter how good you are (or think you are), you should never play so much that it drowns everyone else out.

Feedback

Seek and give feedback that is considered and helpful. Warm feedback is always nice to receive. For example, “I like that chord progression for the chorus. It will sound great with the vocal line over it”. This tells the performer / songwriting partner that you are listening carefully to their suggestions and encourages further input. Positive suggestions are great and are not discouraging if there is a reason given for your preferences, for example, “I think that chord progression would be better used as the pre-chorus section. I feel something stronger or more bold is required for the chorus.”

Reflection

Take time (and stop playing...yes, that means you too!) and let everyone have a say about the part of the song you are working on.

Take a break

Sometimes you can spend a whole lot of time working on a section and just get nowhere. It happens to everyone.

Maybe you are over thinking it or trying to play something that won’t fit or is just too hard for everyone to play. Drop it for a while and go on with something else. You will come back and find something that works later.



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Student Prompt Sheet 7: Forms that fit

Structural Elements

- Intro
- Verse
- Chorus

These three elements are enough to write a song. But to make your song more interesting and less predictable there are some other elements to consider such as:



- Pre-chorus or bridge
- Middle
- Hooks
- Instrumental section or solo

The Classic Verse/Chorus

Here are five popular verse/ chorus forms:

Version 1	Version 2	Version 3	Version 4	Version 5
A Verse	A verse	B Chorus	A verse	A Verse
B Chorus	B Chorus	A Verse	A verse	B Pre Chorus
A Verse	A Verse	B Chorus	B Chorus	C Chorus
B Chorus	B Chorus	A Verse	A Verse	A Verse
A Verse	C Bridge	B Chorus	B Chorus	B Pre Chorus
B Chorus	B Chorus	B Chorus	C Chorus	

Version 1. (ABABAB) Gives you maximum chorus and verse repetition, a potential problem is that if you have melodic repetition within the verse and chorus you will lose the listeners attention.



Version 2. (ABABCB) Adding the bridge to replace the third verse helps to break up the song and create some interest.



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Version 3. (BABAB) The chorus first sets up a dynamic opening to your song. Many 60s Motown songs used variations of this form. The choice of using the chorus first depends on your lyric development in the song as you may need the verse to build interest and set up your chorus as a payoff.



Version 4. (AABABB) Two verses together at the start of your song is a much used form and works best if you have a strong lyrical continuity between them to offset the delay in reaching the chorus. This is more of a problem in slower songs as it takes a lot more time to reach the chorus.

It is important that the two verses aren't saying the same thing in a different way. If you are using the two verses together you may want to look at writing a variation of the first verse melody to help sustain interest in the second verse.

The Kenny Rogers song The Gambler has three verses before the chorus but has such exceptional lyric continuity that the chorus any earlier would be an unwelcome intrusion.



Version 5. (ABCABC) This version offers three different melodic segments and works particularly well in up-tempo songs where the three segments go by quickly, many variations are possible with this form including instrumental versions of any of the segments or instrumental breaks between segments.

These are all basic formats and there are many variations, each song has its own requirements based on melody, lyrics, rhythm, tempo etc. These variations are a guide to help you balance predictability with surprise, without too much of either.



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Student Prompt Sheet 8: Clues from other songs

Sometimes it helps to listen to other songs, particularly ones you like. You can identify the things you like about these songs and use those characteristics to enhance your own song, for example:

"I like the way the bass line descends or steps through each chord."

"The harmonies really add to the important line in the chorus"

"Can we add a pre-chorus section to give the same build up?"

Use the Listening Diary below to collate your thoughts:

Listening Diary

	Song 1	Song 2	Song 3	Song 4	Song 5
Track/Album					
Artist					
Date listened					
Comments on: Structure, lyrics, instruments or form					
Any interesting information about the track or band					



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Student Prompt Sheet 9: Jottings... so you don't forget

It's great to write down all the great things that you did that you will need to remember for the next time you get to your song.

Lyrics	Main theme or idea	Who does what



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